



King County Water Taxi News

King County Water Taxi continues to grow

2012 was another great year for the King County Water Taxi, with both routes seeing more riders.

The West Seattle route provided close to 250,000 passenger trips in 2012. That's about 16 percent above the previous record, shared by 2011 and 2009 (the last year as the Elliott Bay Water Taxi).

Ridership jumped during the first quarter of the year, as many riders stayed with us after trying the Water Taxi for the first time during the October 2011 closure of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. Ridership tripled compared to the first quarter of 2011.

The Vashon Island route grew 6 percent above 2011, providing about 178,000 passenger trips in 2012. That was the highest total since 2005, when the route was operated by Washington State Ferries and was in its last year of a full-service schedule, prior to its current commuter sailing schedule.

Since the *Melissa Ann's* capacity was increased to 172 passengers in late August, more than 80 sailings had passenger counts exceeding the previous 150 capacity.

Where's the moorage and maintenance barge?

We last reported that our moorage and maintenance barge, to be located next to the north side of Pier 48, was snared in construction challenges. Our contractor was having difficulty procuring a new subcontractor in Portland, where the barge was being built.

The good news is that in November, the barge was towed from the shipyard in Portland to Tacoma for the final phase of construction. An office and shop will be assembled on the barge before it is moved to its future home on the waterfront. Our latest timeline has the barge arriving in Seattle in February and then being ready for use within four weeks.

Adopting the *Spirit of Kingston*

The *Spirit of Kingston* may be coming to the King County Water Taxi system.

Many of you probably remember this boat, used for the SoundRunner passenger ferry service between Kingston and Pier 50. The *Spirit of Kingston* is a 65-ft. catamaran that was launched in 2005 and has a capacity of 149 passengers.

When SoundRunner service ended last September, the vessel, which was paid for by a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant, was



Spirit of Kingston

left without a home. The FTA now wants to give the vessel (cost free) to a qualified public transportation system.

After much consideration and analysis of the cost of having a third vessel in our system until we can return one of our two 20+ year-old leased ones, the King County Ferry District granted us permission to try to obtain the *Spirit of Kingston*. If we are successful, the West Seattle route may have a new vessel as early as this spring.

Building new boats

Our last newsletter reported that the King County Marine Division, which operates the Water Taxi, is pursuing the construction of two new boats with capacity for 225 to 250 passengers. The division was developing vessel performance specifications to put out a request for qualifications (RFQ) from vendors.

That RFQ was released and produced two responses representing three shipyards in Washington. We will evaluate these responses and invite qualified shipyards to participate in the next phase—a request for proposals (RFP).

The RFP will go out in the next few months, and we expect to have a signed contract for construction of the vessels in mid 2013.

Our timeline has the first of the two aluminum catamarans being delivered as early as the third quarter in 2014. The second vessel would be delivered three months later.

New 6:15 a.m. sailing from West Seattle

When the winter schedule started in late October, we made a significant change to our West Seattle schedule: We started the morning sailings earlier, creating a 6:15 a.m. departure from West Seattle to Pier 50.

This change allows passengers to get to work by 7 a.m., whether you're working downtown or taking Metro Route 12 up Marion Street to First Hill. If you haven't tried it already, we welcome you to take advantage of this early run to get a great start on your day

Water Taxi passenger trips by month

West Seattle/Downtown Seattle route

	SAILING SEASON	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
1998	May 23 - Oct 16*					2,406	8,449	12,121	13,258	8,601	3,510			48,345
1999	June 19 - Sept 6*						4,289	17,041	19,463	4,580				45,373
2000	No Service													0
2001	May 26 - Dec 31*						28,486	32,047	29,608	17,523	10,141	7,646	6,607	132,058
2002	Jan 1 - Sept 2*	2,945	5,592	7,240	9,045	10,577	14,022	20,983	24,484	1,157				96,045
2003	Apr 21 - Nov 28*				3,004	13,928	20,051	27,363	29,496	14,870	5,328	2,793		116,833
2004	May 1 - Oct 1*					14,574	21,083	29,729	27,647	14,629				107,662
2005	May 1 - Sept 30*					16,534	17,459	29,898	27,632	15,390				106,913
2006	May 1 - Sept 30*					16,304	22,702	30,741	32,210	20,693				122,650
2007	Apr 29 - Nov 2*				2,863	22,259	26,329	36,885	43,020	23,615	6,360			161,331
2008	Apr 27 - Oct 31*				3,203	26,137	31,442	42,436	40,231	25,900	13,555			182,904
2009	Apr 5 - Oct 31*				20,361	31,557	33,864	46,961	43,979	26,602	12,872			216,196
2010	Apr 5 - Dec 31**				13,068	17,389	22,093	37,041	32,169	16,946	10,318	2,578	2,418	154,020
2011	Jan 1 - Dec 31**	2,733	2,569	2,745	10,335	17,367	28,202	38,417	41,157	28,912	25,270	9,734	8,714	216,155
2012	Jan 1 - Dec 31**	8,037	8,837	9,371	18,468	23,638	26,633	41,716	44,225	31,775	20,530	7,967	est. 6,200	247,397
														1,955,808

* KC Metro contracting with Argosy
** King County Ferry District

Vashon Island/downtown Seattle route

	SAILING SEASON	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
1999	WSF *		20,594	26,312	25,962	24,336	28,568	31,740	31,912	28,054	28,328	24,696	24,059	294,561
2000	WSF *	24,324	22,804	26,100	23,728	27,254	28,238	27,512	28,946	24,726	26,988	25,216	23,266	309,102
2001	WSF *	25,260	19,720	23,658	23,280	24,716	22,084	24,462	25,609	19,616	21,826	19,152	16,882	266,265
2002	WSF *	21,632	17,547	17,883	20,862	19,471	17,821	21,330	20,150	18,097	18,616	17,693	17,225	228,327
2003	WSF *	20,342	16,416	17,422	18,035	17,478	17,787	19,779	17,885	17,849	20,691	16,057	16,238	215,979
2004	WSF *	15,115	15,819	17,461	16,989	15,343	17,002	16,209	18,222	15,996	15,286	15,285	14,223	192,950
2005	WSF *	15,252	14,155	17,250	14,757	15,855	16,088	16,248	18,508	13,919	11,792	11,366	10,079	175,269
2006	WSF **	10,912	9,534	11,109	10,230	12,000	11,643	10,195	12,424	10,522	11,120	10,075	10,075	129,839
2007	WSF **	11,294	10,526	10,964	8,948	10,715	10,662	10,912	12,960	9,546	10,740	9,916	7,838	125,021
2008	WSF **	10,609	9,213	9,762	10,756	10,472	10,386	11,367	9,998	10,202	10,599	8,053	7,894	119,311
2009	KC Ferry District ***	8,813	8,184	9,459	9,359	8,338	9,006	9,469	8,661	8,826	11,005	9,756	10,098	110,974
2010	KC Ferry District ***	11,081	10,847	13,448	12,603	12,003	13,963	13,276	14,569	13,923	14,415	12,182	11,310	153,620
2011	KC Ferry District ***	13,810	11,996	15,083	13,414	14,087	14,487	13,887	15,681	14,082	15,170	13,517	12,405	167,619
2012	KC Ferry District ***	12,820	14,130	15,330	14,835	15,604	14,989	15,150	16,392	13,994	17,642	14,572	12,495	177,953
														2,666,790

* Washington State Ferries year round full-day operation
** Washington State Ferries year round commuter service
*** King County Ferry District year round commuter service

Update from Vashon deckhand
Chad Weisenfeld

Hello all,

Just wanted to give you an update on how I am following my motorcycle accident last October.



Chad Weisenfeld

The accident caused me a shattered pelvis, dislocated hip and knee, and other injuries. No one can really say how long it will be until I am back to “slinging” lines on the water taxi, but I really hope it is soon!

I have two metal plates and eight screws in my left hip. I have been working on reducing the swelling in my knee and leg, increasing my range of motion, and learning to bear weight and walk again.

From my rented hospital bed I watch sports, movies, and play video games. As often as possible I work on my physical therapy. I have many medical appointments each week.

I’m going to do everything I can to get back to full form. I miss working down on the water, seeing sunrises and sunsets. Most of all I miss the people—all of the wonderful Vashonite commuters and my co-workers.

I want to thank everybody for visiting in the hospital, sending presents, signing the lovely banners that surround my bed, donating sick time, asking what you can do to help, or sending your best wishes. Deckhands Alex and Mike see me almost every week and can answer any questions you might have. I send you all my best wishes and hope to see you shortly.

Yours truly,
Chad

Thank you!

From the vessel crews, the engineering team, the shoreside agents and the administrative team, we extend a big thanks to all of you for your continued patronage and for making 2012 another great year. We recognize that your ridership allows us to have our wonderful jobs serving you and sharing the commutes with our extended “family.”

Happy New Year to you all!

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206-263-5277 (TTY Relay: 711)

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